QUICKSTART ARENA THE CONTEST

Welcome, hero! Are you ready to enter the Arena and experience epic battles?

This is your **First Match guide**, with all essential rules you need to play the game. Resolve specific doubts in the **Rulebook**, using it as a reference material.

Arena: the Contest is played in turns. A **Turn** is the moment you activate your **Combatant**. During your turn, you may perform, in any order:

- **1 Prime Action:** Usually an **Attack** or **Heroic Action**;
- **1 Move Action:** Move your **Combatant** through the **Battlegrid**.

Game Modes

PvP - Competitive:

The Contest: two teams of heroes fight until one team is fully eliminated.

PvE - Cooperative:

Mission: face terrible villains and challenges to achieve the quest objective.

Boss Battle: confront a deadly foe, able to fight an entire team of heroes.

- **Missions** and **Boss Battles** can be played individually (as single matches) or continuously, in an *Epic Campaign*.

- Check the **Quest Guide** and **Campaign Tome** for more information on PvE Quests.

Combat Roles

Seven **Combat Roles** indicate a hero's main function in combat.

Melee	Ranged
Brute *Savage strikers who deal huge amounts of damage.*	**Healer** *Reliable supporters who heal and boost allies.*
Tactician *Nimble combatants who benefit from allies and disable enemies.*	**Shooter** *Deadly strikers who excel at ranged combat.*
Tank *Powerful defenders who taunt enemies and protect allies.*	**Controller** *Resourceful combatants who disable and attack multiple enemies.*
Bruiser *Resilient combatants who fight back enemies and withstand lots of damage.*	

Assembling your Team

- ***PvP:*** Each team chooses 3 or 4 heroes.
- ***PvE:*** Choose 4 heroes to assemble one team.

Each hero in a team must have a different **Combat Role**.

After choosing, grab each hero's **Herokit**:

1. **Heropad**: Shows a hero's **Stats**, **Attacks** and **Passive Power**.
2. **Attack Card**: Shows detailed information about an attack and helps keep track of its **Effects**.
3. **Figure**: Indicates a hero's current position on the **Battlegrid**.
4. **Hero Token**: Shows a hero's current HP on the **HP Track**.

Then, each team grabs 1 **Team Token**, 2 **Heroic Action Cards** and 1 **Twenty-sided die**.

1. **Team Token**: Tracks heroes' **Turn Order** and availability of **Special Attacks** for each Team.
2. **Heroic Action Cards:**
   - At the start of the match, each team secretly chooses 2 Heroic Actions. Each may be performed only once in the match.
   - All Team Token's rules about Special attacks apply to Heroic Actions. So, you cannot perform one when your Team Token is on the "No Special" side.
3. **Die**: Roll it for each Strike of an attack to determine whether it hits or not.

Customizing and Learning

For introductory matches, the Advanced Rules of **Reaction Attack**, **Sidestep**, **Mob**, and **Focus** may be ignored. In this manner, the **Condition** Hastened is ignored.

Once you become more familiar with the game, try the Advanced Rules. They will greatly enhance the positioning strategies.

There are also **Magic Items and First Aid**, features that make the game even more dynamic. Their rules are found in the Rulebook.

Magic Items:

Artifacts: Mystical objects that enhance a hero's versatility and powers.

Scrolls: Spells that make the game unpredictable and allow bluffing strategies.

First Aid: Unique Action that allows a hero to revive an ally.

Starting a PvP match

Setting the Arena

Any scenario may be created using the **Tiles**. You may also use the preset scenario found on the back side of the board.

Placing the Tiles

Barrier
walls and doors.

Obstacle
statues, chests, levers and orbs.

Terrain
lava, altars, portals and ruins.

(see the back of the Player Aid for quick rules on Tiles)

Players can build a custom Battlefield, in any way they please, or follow the competitive procedure below:

- Each team grabs 5 tiles.
- Both Teams roll a die. The winner (highest number) starts by placing a tile anywhere in the Battlegrid.
- The teams take turns until all tiles have been placed. Tiles cannot be placed adjacently or on top of each other.

Choosing the Heroes

Hero selection follows the same pattern: the winner of the die roll chooses first and the teams take turns choosing their heroes. The restrictions are:

- Teams must have 3 or 4 heroes.
- Both Teams must start with the same number of heroes.
- Only one hero of each Combat Role may be in a team.

After the heroes have been chosen, teams grab their **Herokits** (see page 1) and place their **Hero Tokens** on the **HP Track**, according to their **Hit Points** Stat.

Hero Tokens have shapes and colors to distinguish Teams on the HP Track.

Deploying the Heroes

Both Teams roll a die. The winner chooses a half of the Battlegrid (numeric coordinates) and places a hero on one of its squares. This hero will be the first to take a turn.

Heroes can be placed anywhere on their team's half. Teams take turns deploying heroes, until all are placed.

Turns will follow the order in which Heroes were placed. To track it, arrange your team's Heropads, from left to right, as you deploy Heroes. The other team must do the same on the other side of the table.

Turn Order

The Turn Order corresponds to the order in which heroes were deployed (and Heropads arranged). It is tracked using the Team Tokens.

At the start of the match, teams must put their Team Token on their leftmost Heropad (belonging to the first Hero to act for them). At the end of the hero's turn, move it to the right (next hero to act).

Follow this pattern on every hero's turn. When there is no Heropad to the right, return the Team Token to the first hero.

Teams alternate turns, following each team's Turn Order. **On PvP Mode, heroes of the same Team never take consecutive turns**. See the examples:

After a Hero dies, teams keep alternating, following each team's Turn Order independently. For example, if (B) dies:

Reading a Quest

Introduction
A summary of the background, foes and goals.

It indicates the quest **objectives,** and how many **Experience Points** (XP) each is worth. Accomplishing the Primary Objective ends the quest.

Description
Describes the scenario's special features, rooms, foes, tiles and events.

- ***Events***: During the quest, some specific actions will trigger Events (new enemies, opening of doors, etc).

Foes
Shows stats and attacks of the mission's enemies. If it is a Boss, check its bosspad and attack cards.

Components Box
Shows all game pieces used in the match.

Quest Map
Indicates the initial position of tiles and foes (starters and future spawns alike). Icons with a white border indicate foes on the grid when the quest starts. Each event will have a distinct border color, detailed on the instructions.

The Foes

There are five generic categories of foes to represent all villains and bosses you will encounter in missions:

- **Sentinel**: Melee villain encountered in quests;
- **Soldier**: Melee villain with an extended reach;
- **Sniper**: Ranged counterpart of Sentinels;
- **Warlord**: Powerful, unique enemy;
- **Boss**: The most dreadful foes to be confronted.

Villain Kit: Villain Card, Villain Figure and Villain Token.

Boss Kit: Bosspad, Attack Cards, Boss Figure and Boss Tokens.

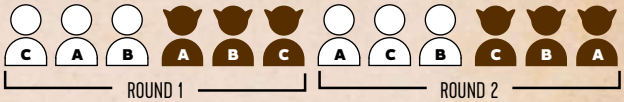
Starting a PvE Match

- Choose a *Mission* or *Boss Battle* from the Quest Guide;
- Follow the Quest Guide's instructions to prepare the Battlegrid. Grab the required components. Place tiles and villains.
- Deploy the heroes: Place heroes in any square with stairs (up to one hero per square).
- Place tokens according to each combatant's Hit Point Stat. Some quests also use other tokens (statue, doors, time, etc).

Turn Order

- **Round** is a set of all Heroes' and Foes' turns. Heroes always start the Round. After all Heroes have taken turns, all foes take theirs. This concludes a Round.
- In each round, heroes and foes can take their turns in any order chosen by the Player(s), provided that each combatant acts once, and only once, per round.

Round is a PvE concept, not used in PvP mode.



Foes' Actions

- Foes' actions are guided by the Evil Power cards (villains), or Boss Spell cards (Boss).
- Foes always move the shortest and safest distance to reach their target (meaning they won't step on lava or incite Reaction Attacks unnecessarily).
- If a foe cannot attack a target after moving, its Prime Action is spent with an extra Move Action, to try to get adjacent (or as close as possible) to the target.
- Villains always make the best available attack.
- **If more than one course of action is within the rules, players decide which will happen.**

Evil Power and Boss Spell

- At the start of the Match, shuffle all Evil Power (or Boss Spell) cards and put them face down.
- Draw one card every round, at the start of the first foe's turn (only draw Evil Power if there are foes on the grid). If all cards have been used, reshuffle them and continue drawing.
- Evil Power cards feature specific commands, or the Basic Strategy:

Basic Strategy	
1	Attack the nearest hero.
2	If there is a tie, attack the one with the lowest HP among them.
3	If the tie remains, players decide which hero gets attacked.

Fate Cards

- Some Quests have Events or situations that use these cards.
- Draw a card at random to determine the event or situation.

Flasks

- Shuffle flasks into a deck and draw the card on top when you kill a foe; then, give it to any Hero in the Team. The bearer can consume it to perform a special ability.
- Each Hero can own a maximum of two flasks at a time.

Epic Campaign

The game also features an **Epic Campaign**, in which players gain Experience Points to purchase Level UP, Scrolls and Artifacts. See **Quest Guide** and **Campaign Tome**.

Reading a Heropad

A Name and Combat Role.

B Combat Role Icon and Color.

- There are 7 different Roles. Each Role has specific Stats and Passive Power.

C Hit Points (HP): Indicates how much damage a hero can endure.

- Each Hero Token is placed on the **HP Track** according to this Stat.
- Damage taken reduces a hero's HP by the same amount, while Healing effects may increase it (up to the Stat value). Update the position of the Hero Token accordingly.
- A hero is alive while having 1 HP or more. If HP drops below 1, the hero is **Dead**.

D Basic Attack: Indicates the damage a hero deals when making a Basic Attack.

- The range of a **Basic Attack** is indicated by the icon next to the damage value:

  1 square (Melee Attack);

  8 squares (Ranged Attack).

Basic Attack	
1 square / 8 squares	1 enemy
Benefit: Gain a +1 bonus to your roll.	
Deals damage equal to Basic Attack stat	
Miss: No residual damage.	

E Defense: The minimum roll required on a die to hit the hero. (apply all modifiers, if any)

F Movement: Indicates how many Movement Points a hero can spend in a Move Action.

A Move Action is used to **Move** or **Sidestep**.

Move:

- For each Movement Point spent, a hero's figure may leave the square it currently occupies and enter an adjacent one.
- Heroes' figures can be moved orthogonally or diagonally, in any combination.
- You don't need to spend all your points on your Move Action, but you lose all unused points (you can't Move, Attack and then Move again).

Sidestep (Advanced Rules):

A hero may spend a number of Movement Points equal to its Movement Stat to move only 1 square (orthogonally or diagonally). While Sidestepping, a hero does not incite Reaction Attacks (by leaving a square adjacent to enemies). Sidestep allows you to swap positions with an ally, if one occupies your landing square.

Movement Restrictions:

- Diagonal movement is not allowed through the corners of squares occupied by barriers (walls), but it is allowed through Obstacles and other Combatants.
- A hero cannot finish a Move Action in a square occupied by Barriers, Obstacles or other Combatants.
- A hero cannot move through squares occupied by enemies, Barriers or Obstacles, but can move freely through squares occupied by allies and terrains.

G Primary Attacks: A hero's main resource in combat.

- A Prime Action may be spent making a Primary Attack. This attack can be repeated many times in a match.

H Special Attacks: A hero's finest and deadliest resource.

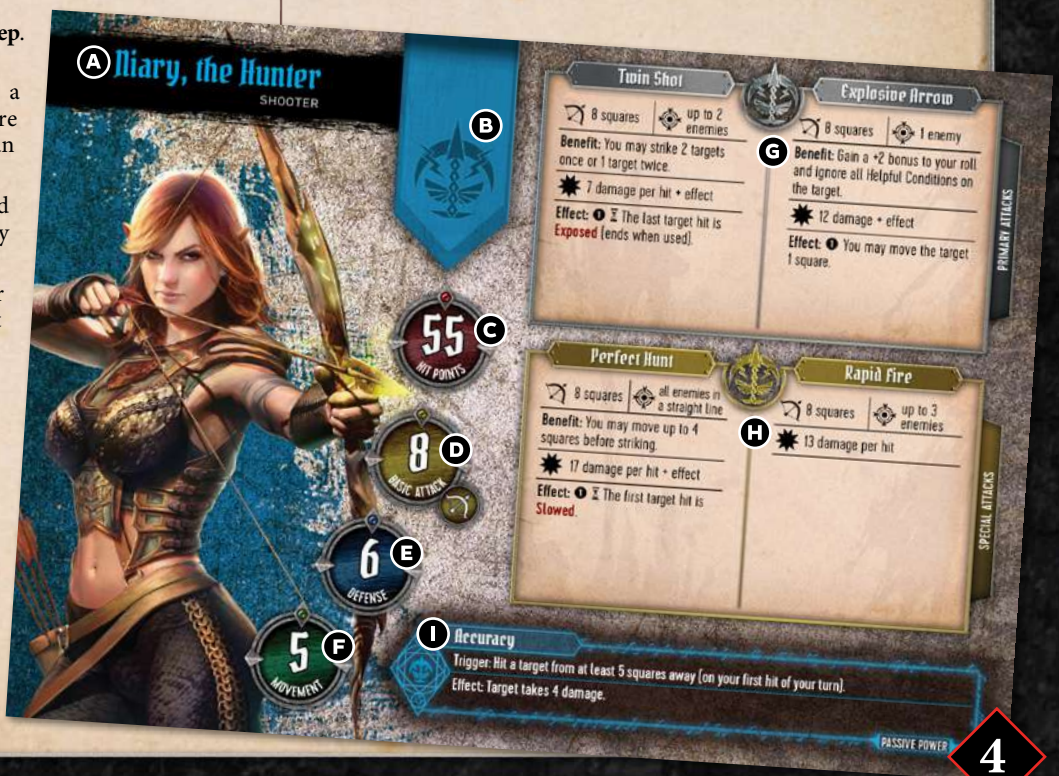
- Each hero's Special Attack may be performed only once per match.
- After making a Special Attack, flip your Team Token to "No Special" side. Your team may not make Special Attacks until the Team Token is flipped again.
- When the next hero on your team ends its turn, flip your Team Token to the "Special Ready" side. Now your team can make Special Attacks again.

Some Special Attacks are **Interrupt Attacks**.

- Interrupt Attacks are made during the target's turn;
- They must be announced when the target declares its attack, before any Benefits happen or the die is rolled.
- Interrupt Attacks are resolved before the target's attack.

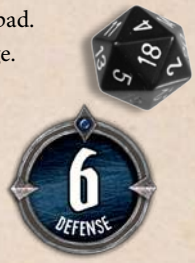
I Passive Power: A special ability that distinguishes Roles, making Heroes excel in combat in different ways.

- Upon meeting certain conditions (Trigger), an Effect is applied.
- Some triggers are verified when the target is chosen.



Making an Attack

Essentials:



- Choose an attack from your Heropad.
- Select a suitable target within range.
- Roll a die, apply the modifiers (if any) and compare the result to the target's Defense stat.
  - **Hit**: If the result is equal or higher, the attack is a Hit and applies damage and all Effects described on it.
  - **Miss**: If the result is lower, the attack misses and deals Residual Damage. A natural 1 (ignoring modifiers) is always a Miss.
  - **Critical Hit**: If the die result is natural 20, the attack is a Critical Hit. See below:

Critical Hit Effect
• Effect: You **may** deal +5 damage to the target;
• The damage may be applied before the attack's Effects;
• This can only be applied once per turn.

Reading an Attack

Essential Terms on Attack Cards:

- **You**: the combatant who owns the attack card.
- **Combatant**: any character (Hero or foe) fighting on the Battlegrid.
- **Enemy**: any combatant from the opposing team.
- **Ally**: any combatant on your team that is not you.

A Range: Indicates the maximum distance between a hero and its target for the attack to be made. Measured orthogonally and/or diagonally, in any combination.

Range 1 : Melee Attack. The hero must be adjacent to the target.
Range 2 : Melee Attack (Does not incite Reaction Attacks).
Range 8 : Ranged Attack (Incites Reaction Attacks if the hero is adjacent to enemies).

B Target : Indicates how many and which combatants may be targeted by this attack.

- Some Attacks have multiple Strikes. They may attack multiple enemies or the same enemy more than once.
- The die must be rolled once for each Strike.

C Benefit or Drawback: Whenever an attack presents these features, read and follow its instructions.

- They are part of the attack, but they are not Effects.

D Hit : Indicates what happens if the attack hits.

- First, apply the Passive Power effect, if triggered. Then, the attack deals the amount of damage described. Then, Effects are applied in the order listed.
- If the damage reduces the target's HP below 1, the target is considered Dead only after the Effects are applied.

E Effect: Special features of attacks that change the circumstances of combat in many ways.

- **Instant**: resolves completely during the attack.
- **Temporary** : lasts until the attacker takes its Turn again. (some Effects end if used).
- **Permanent**: lasts until the affected Combatant dies.

Temporary and Permanent Effects are tracked by placing the Attack Card on the affected hero's Heropad or the affected foe's Card.

Once the attack hits, regardless of whom the effects target, they apply automatically (they don't require new die rolls).

Some Effects apply **Conditions**, identified by a unique name and highlighted in **red** or **blue**. See Player Aid and Rulebook.

F Miss: Indicates what happens if the attack misses.

- If the attack has multiple Strikes, all of them must be missed to apply Residual Damage.

Residual Damage

- Basic and Reaction Attack: not applicable;
- Primary Attack: 5 damage;
- Special Attack: 15 damage (if the target is an ally, it regains 15 HP);
- **It deals non-lethal damage**;
- It ignores any Effects on you and the targets (except if they relate to Residual Damage specifically);
- It can be applied only once per attack, even if there are multiple missed targets.

Non-Lethal Damage

- Damage that cannot lower its target's HP below 1.

G Border: Silver borders indicate Primary Attacks; Gold borders indicate Special Attacks.

Your Turn

Starting your Turn

- Any Temporary Effects applied by you end. Take back the Primary Attack Card tracking the Effect;
- Check if you are affected by any Effects or Circles (Tanks and Bruisers Passive Powers);
- Check which side of your Team Token is up: "Special Ready" or "No Special".

During your turn, you may perform a Move Action and a Prime Action, in any order:

Move Action	Prime Action
Spend Movement Points to: • Move • Sidestep • Provide First Aid • Pick up (or transfer) items	• Extra Move Action • Heroic Action • Basic Attack • Primary Attack • Special Attack

Finishing your Turn

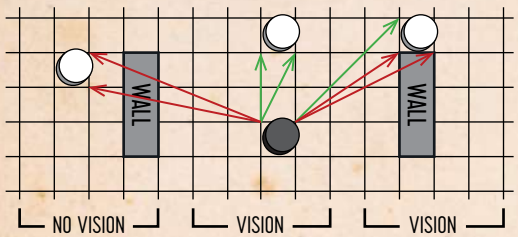
- Flip the team Token to "Special Ready" if the token read "No Special" when the turn started.
- Place the Team token on the Heropad of the next hero to act, following the Turn Order;
  - **PvP mode**: The next hero is the one whose Heropad is immediately to the right.
  - **PvE mode:** The Team chooses the next hero to act, until all heroes have taken their turns.

Vision

Check if there are Barriers fully blocking the way between the target and yourself. If there are not, you have Vision and can attack the target. Combatants must have visual contact to attack and apply Effects.

In case it is not clear, trace imaginary straight lines between the corners of the square your target occupies and the corners of your own square. If at least one is not interrupted by Barriers, you have Vision. Obstacles, Terrains and Combatants do not block Vision. Edges and corners of squares occupied by Barriers are considered blocked.

For detailed examples, see the Rulebook.

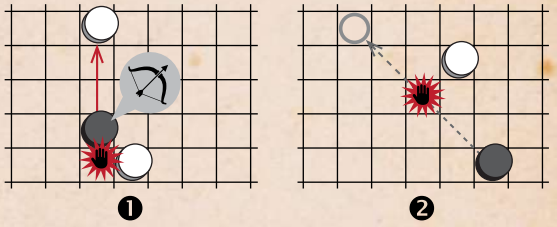


Next you will find some **Advanced Rules** that greatly impact the game but can be suppressed in your introductory matches, until you feel more familiar with the game.

Reaction Attack

You **may** make a Reaction Attack if an enemy incites one. Any Combatant incites Reaction Attacks by:

1. Making a Ranged Attack while adjacent to an enemy;
2. Leaving a square adjacent to an enemy on its **Move Action** (except for Sidestep).



Reaction Attack	
Made during the target's turn.	
1 square	1 enemy inciting a Reaction Attack
Deals damage equal to Basic Attack stat + effect	
Effect: ❶ The target loses 1 movement point this turn.	
Miss: No residual damage.	

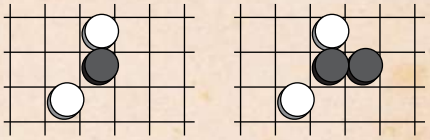
- A Combatant may incite several Reactions per turn;
- Combatants can make only one Reaction Attack per turn;
- Combatants only incite Reaction Attacks on their own Move Actions;
- Reaction Attacks resolve before the attack or movement that incited them.

Mob

Mobbed combatants are considered **Exposed** to attacks made by mobbers.

A Mob happens when the following conditions are met:

- Two or more allies are adjacent to the same enemy;
- These allies are not adjacent to each other;
- This enemy is not adjacent to one or more of its own allies.



Focus

Targets of your Ranged attacks are considered **Exposed** if you:

- Start your turn with no combatants (allies or enemies) within 3 squares of you and;
- Forfeit your entire Move Action and Benefit-allowed moves (if any), which must be spent focusing.